REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE

abcd
INSPIRING CHORAL LEADERSHIP

Rehearsal planning

- This includes your own preparation – ***knowing*** the score thoroughly before the rehearsal is an essential part of teaching the music effectively.
- Try to structure the rehearsal so that the most difficult work is done relatively early – after the voices are warmed up, but before they get tired!
- Plan a realistic amount of new work, alongside something more familiar.

Strategies for building and reinforcing musical skills

- The alternative to "note-bashing" – developing confidence through demonstration and reinforcement.
- Use sol-fa, numbers or neutral syllables to sing the notes – separate the words from the pitches.
- Develop aural awareness in singers – "building" chords to focus on pitching – getting sections to listen to others for tonal quality etc.

Techniques for working in depth

- Work in small sections: add on, work - add on, work etc. – then go back and do the entire section/phrase/"chunk" as a whole.
- Re-evaluate, then work from the end backwards, adding on from the end to the start – sing the whole section – re-evaluate and go on, go back or use vocal activity to meet the challenge.
- Have all sections singing the challenging part in octaves – just men, just women, one section at a time then all together again. Layer on other parts one at a time until successful, and then go on.

Techniques to keep focus and attention

- Keep things fresh. Experiment: movement; vocal exercises; quick paced rehearsing; changing positions in the choir/in the room for both singers and conductor; NOT conducting.

- Being aware of your singers' response – the power of working from memory .
- One gesture is worth a thousand words – One word is worth a thousand gestures!

REHEARSAL PACING

- **Let the singers sing as much as possible**
- **Listen carefully to be able to prioritise the issues to be dealt with**
- **When you stop deal with one or two issues at most**
- **Speak in bullet points (slowly and clearly)**
- **Make clear where you are re-starting**
- **When you re-start LISTEN for the issue(s) you have just stopped for and acknowledge if they are solved. If not stop again.**
- **Keep the singers involved: Show them don't tell them!!**

Begin and end with Singing!